other so as to form a first pn junction therebetween;

a third semiconductor region of said second conductivity type contacting said second semiconductor region;

a plurality of fourth semiconductor regions of said first conductivity type contacting and being at least partially surrounded by said second semiconductor regions;

wherein said fourth semiconductor regions contact said third semiconductor region such as to form a second pn junction therebetween;

a fifth semiconductor region of second conductivity type contacting said first semiconductor region and being spaced from said second semiconductor region;

wherein said fifth and first semiconductor regions contact each other such as to form a third pn junction therebetween;

a sixth semiconductor region of said second conductivity type contacting said fifth semiconductor region;

a plurality of seventh semiconductor regions of said first conductivity type contacting and being at least partially surrounded by said fifth semiconductor region;

wherein said seventh semiconductor regions contact said sixth semiconductor region such as to form a fourth pn junction therebetween; and

first and second electrodes in electrical contact with said sixth and third semiconductor regions, respectively;

wherein said third semiconductor region is interposed between said fourth semiconductor regions and said second electrode to embed said fourth semiconductor regions and separate them from the second electrode;

wherein the impurity concentration of at least one of said first and second semiconductor regions is less than the impurity concentration of at least one of said third and said plurality of fourth semiconductor regions, and the impurity concentration of at least one of said first and fifth semiconductor regions is less than the impurity concentration of at least one of said sixth and said plurality of seventh semiconductor regions;

wherein the second pn junction undergoes breakdown when the one reverse biasing of the first pn junction exceeds a predetermined amount, said predetermined amount being insufficient to cause breakdown of said first pn junction; and the fourth pn junction undergoes breakdown when the another reverse biasing of the third pn junction exceeds a predetermined amount, said amount being insufficient to cause breakdown of said third pn junction.

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